

1 AN ACT concerning loan repayment assistance for nurses.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Loan Repayment Assistance for Nurses Act.

6 Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to
7 establish a program in the Department of Public Health to
8 increase the total number of nurses in this State and
9 encourage nurses to locate in areas where nurse shortages
10 exist by providing educational loan repayment assistance
11 grants to nurses who practice in areas of the State
12 demonstrating the greatest need for nurses.

13 Section 10. Definitions. In this Act, unless the context
14 otherwise requires:

15 "Department" means the Department of Public Health.

16 "Designated shortage area" means (i) an area designated
17 by the Director of Public Health as a nurse shortage area or
18 (ii) an area served by a disproportionate share hospital as
19 described in the Illinois Public Aid Code.

20 "Educational loans" means higher education student loans
21 that a person has incurred in attending a registered
22 professional nursing education program.

23 "Nurse" means a registered nurse or registered
24 professional nurse as those terms are defined in the Nursing
25 and Advanced Practice Nursing Act.

26 "Program" means the educational loan repayment assistance
27 program for nurses established by the Department under this
28 Act.

29 Section 15. Establishment of program. The Department

1 shall establish an educational loan repayment assistance
2 program for nurses who practice in designated shortage areas.
3 The Department shall administer the program and make all
4 necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this Act for
5 the program's effective implementation. The Department may
6 use up to 5% of the appropriation for this program for
7 administration and promotion of nursing incentive programs.

8 Section 20. Application. Beginning July 1, 2004, the
9 Department shall, each year, consider applications for
10 assistance under the program. The form of application and the
11 information required to be set forth in the application shall
12 be determined by the Department, and the Department shall
13 require applicants to submit with their applications such
14 supporting documents as the Department deems necessary.

15 Section 25. Eligibility. To be eligible for assistance
16 under the program, an applicant must meet all of the
17 following qualifications:

18 (1) He or she must be a citizen or permanent
19 resident of the United States.

20 (2) He or she must be a resident of this State.

21 (3) He or she must be practicing full-time in a
22 designated shortage area as a nurse.

23 (4) He or she must currently be repaying
24 educational loans.

25 Section 30. The award of grants. Under the program, for
26 each year that a qualified applicant practices full-time in a
27 designated shortage area as a nurse, the Department shall,
28 subject to appropriation, award a grant to that person in an
29 amount equal to the amount in educational loans that the
30 person must repay that year. However, the total amount in
31 grants that a person may be awarded under the program shall

1 not exceed \$5,000. The Department shall encourage recipients
2 to use the grants to pay off their educational loans.

3 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect on
4 July 1, 2003.